

**CHILD WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2014
MEETING MINUTES**

Members present:

Gail Barber, Jake Carmi, Dave Zimmerman, Jean McAleer, Wendy Rickman, Jerry Foxhoven, Rep. Marti Anderson, Susan Walkup, George Belitsos, Julie Heiderscheit (phone).

Members absent:

Edwin Daye, Julie Mann Phillips, Sen. Amy Sinclair, Sen. Amanda Ragan, Rep. Rob Taylor, Charles Palmer, Denise Moore, Chris Secrist, Ann Gruenwald, Nancy Magnall.

Visitors present:

Kristie Oliver-Coalition

Kenneth Ohms-Legislative Services Agency

Sandi Hurtado-Peters-Department of Management (Phone)

Meeting called to order at 1:06 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes for the June 6, 2014 meeting stand approved as written.

Report on Funding and other issues affecting DHS:

Wendy gave a brief over view of the Budget for 2016 & 2017.

- The budget has been completed and had been submitted to the DHS Council for approval. The budget is on line for viewing <http://dhs.iowa.gov/> , the child welfare section is 6 to 10 pages, Wendy recommends reading it. We do not expect a huge infusion of resources for child and family services.
- The budget has a short fall for the balance of 2014 and also for 2016 & 2017, the short fall is caused by the increase in the need for Medicaid. Each of the departments are expected to manage their budgets, therefore each of the divisions at DHS are doing their part to contribute to the shortfall to cover the Medicaid deficit. The adoption program has its own section in the budget.

- There are two areas where we have asked for dollars to be transferred into the department. The first one is for the expansion of AMP into Eldora, the second one is for 1 million dollars from the Mental Health division, and these dollars will cover the hard to place children from the old Toledo.

Two separate packages in the budget are:

1. FMAP, as the state is improving with economic recovery, the state receive less assistance from the Federal government. We are asking for more money to cover this program.
2. Group care beds, currently we have an appropriation for 956 kids per month and we currently have 717 kids that are using these beds. We continue to place the children with family members when available. At this time we are not asking for any additional money.

Foster care, There is a federal requirement from the USDA that we pay our foster care rates at 65%, currently we pay them at 59% we have paid at this level in the past, so we are asking for a change in the wording.

Other federal programs that are in the division are TANF, CCDF and SNAP. At this time the President's budget is on hold and we are waiting to see what the federal budget will pay for these programs.

Report on Children's Justice Activities:

Gail gave an update on Children's Justice. They have just completed three days of training for Attorneys and Judges. This training is called the Redbook training. There is a red book for attorneys that work for child welfare cases. Attorneys that work with child welfare cases are required to have 3 hrs.of juvenile cle's. There was also 2 day training for Judges.

We have a pilot project for a task force on judicial excellence. They are looking at what are the expectations for judges and looking at quality, they will be developing a process for looking at where we are really at with our cases.

There was an education forum held in May, since that time Director Palmer, Director Buck, Justice Appel meet with some of the members of the educational collaborative, they asked them to develop a work plan for next year. They are asking to improve

graduation rates of children in foster care, school suspensions and to develop a data sharing program so we can see how our children are doing and what is working.

A pilot project has recently been started in a Waterloo law firm there is an Attorney/Social Worker team. They are going to be looking at pre-file cases and also at cases that are going to court to make sure the children are getting the services that they need.

Update on Differential Response:

Differential Response was implemented in January 2014. A report for the 1st quarter of the year is on our website <http://dhs.iowa.gov/>. Our projections were close to the actual numbers that were projected prior to implementation. We are currently working on the report for the complete first 6 months and this report will be completed by the end of September.

There are two continued concerns in this area:

1. We continue to talk with the Drug Endangered Children (DEC) teams. If meth is part of the allegations at intake and there is a child endangerment charge, they flow down the traditional side. If a charge is a misdemeanor they can go down the family assessment side. Some of the DEC teams are a little concerned with this process, they feel that they are not getting automatic referrals.
2. If Meth is alleged in the allegation and the child is 5 yrs. or younger the case goes directly to the traditional side. If the child is 6 yrs. or older (and there are no other issues) they can go down the family assessment side.

We are putting together data to improve what DR is doing. At this time children that first are going from the family assessment side and then get moved to the traditional side is running right at 4% of the cases.

The 6 month report will be sent out, and it will also be place on our web page <http://dhs.iowa.gov/>. If you have any questions about it, please contact Wendy, or bring them to the next CWAC meeting.

Discussion of Issues Apparent to Arise in Upcoming Legislative Session:

1. Training School issues
2. Examining the educational part of institutions and moving it to the Dept. of Education and how it will be funded.
3. The Family rights group, they would like to change and make DHS make changes in guardianship.

Other Business:

George Belitsos asked if the Children's Cabinet is still a possibility. Wendy will check on the status of the Children's Cabinet and the future of this group.

George Belitsos will be retiring in December 2015.

Agenda items for the December meeting

1. Update on the budget.
2. Status of the Children's council & future of CWAC.
3. Human Trafficking.
4. Investigations with the Disability Rights Group.

Public Comment:

None.

Future Meeting Dates:

Our next meeting will be held December 5th, 2014, in the Clinic Library at the Drake Legal Clinic from 1:00 pm to 3:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

Lori VandeWall
Recording Secretary